

# A Short Biography of Shaykh Walīd حفظه الله As-Sinānī



**'He is our Imam in Sabr and Patience'**

- Al-Muhaddith Sulayman Al-'Alwan

**DĀR AT-TAWHĪD**



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Translated and Edited by Dār At-Tawhīd

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

### **Translator's Foreword**

Verily all praise is for Allāh, we Praise Him, we seek His help and His forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allāh from the evil of our own souls and from our bad deeds. Whomsoever Allāh guides will never be led astray, and whomsoever Allāh leaves astray no one can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh alone without any partner and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and messenger and His chosen one and His friend and His best Creation may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, his household and his companions, and those who followed them in goodness.

This is a short biography of Shaykh Shaykh Walīd As-Sinānī. All information was spread in a series of tweets by the family of the Shaykh on the handle @al\_senani2.

We ask Allāh to grant his family patience and to hasten his release.

Your brother Abū 'Abd Allāh Al-Maghribī

17 - Muharram 1443 AH

## **His Name, Background and Qualifications:**

He is Walīd ibn Sālih ibn Hamad ibn ‘Alī As-Sinānī Al-’Āmerī As-Subay’ī from the city of Al-’Anayzah and his Kunya is Abū Subay’ī. He graduated from High School and went to the university but he disliked the way they were educating so he was transferred to the Central Library and became an employee at the university.

He attended the lectures of Dr. Sālih Al-Fawzān and he had a friendship with the Mufti of the Saudi State; ‘Abd Al-’Azīz Āal As-Shaykh

And from the prominent scholars whom he was influenced by were; Shaykh Hamūd At-Tuwayjarī and he was very influenced by the Shaykh ‘Abd Ar-Rahmān Ad-Dawsarīy. He memorized a lot of his words and he used it as proof and evidence.

He had a high concern for Tawhīd and ‘Aqīdah and his focus was on a lot of matters in this branch of knowledge. He had a great concern for the Rasā’il (Letters) of Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Al-Wahhāb and his sons, and he memorized a lot of those letters by text. He was excellent in Arabic Grammar and he never made mistakes and he disliked them (i.e., mistakes).

He specializes in History and (the science) of Lineage and he became and was a reference for the people in these two branches of knowledge. He memorized a lot of Historical Events and battles that occurred in Najd and the poetry that were written about it.

He is very strong in the Hujjah (evidence), eloquent in the debates, he has a great enthusiasm for what he believes in to be the correct in front of Allāh, he is extremely honest and brave in commanding good and forbidding evil. He doesn’t fear the blame of the blamers and those who sat with him know this very well.

He was generous and hospitable, and he was known for his great generosity, and the guests would visit him from Riyādh and outside.

His characteristics are patience, toughness, and bravery. He is known for his journeys and travelling in the desert of Najd where he mixed with the people of the desert memorizing their events and lineages. The people were amazed by this and he has stories and narratives about this that are too long to mention.

In the beginning he had a great enthusiasm and passion for the Saudi state, he went very far defending them and he has a letter on the state's background and history. But he turned 180 degrees after the (first) Gulf War, and after the Gulf states sought the help from foreign (kāfir) forces. It was a heavy blow for him and he didn't hide his criticism for this step, which led to him turning on them.

### **The Reasons for his Arrest:**

The turning point in his life came after the invasion of the Gulf and the Arab leaders seeking the assistance from the foreign forces against Saddām Hussein. He never stopped criticizing this decision and named it 'A Colonization' and he even criticized the Fatwa that was issued concerning this matter.

His talks and speeches were only restricted to people's gatherings and his own gatherings when he had guests because he didn't have publications or a pulpit like other Du'āt (callers to Islām) had at that time, this was the reason why he had a lack of fame.

He started having debates and discussions on the legitimacy of the Saudi State based on what he saw from it.

From it was the invasion of the Gulf, and this was the most important issue which he became famous for, and he always brought it up with strength and on every occasion.

During one of Shaykh Walīd's travels, to be precise to the city of Haql close to the borders, he distributed the books of Shaykh ibn Bāz and Permanent Committee for Fatwa related to Al-'Aqīdah with some advice.

It was at that time that he was called in by the intelligence agencies. So he attended and they started asking him about his name and his view on the Saudi State. So the Shaykh stated everything he had and he mentioned his evidences. They also asked him about the organisation or logo he was affiliated with, they Shaykh answered them that he follows no one but the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). His close friends and acquaintances weren't doubting that the Shaykh would be arrested the moment he reached Ar-Riyādh, but the arrest was delayed for years after this event, it might be possible they already had him under observation.

From the issues that he became famous for are: his disavowal of the Military Salute because he always raised this issue after the (obligatory) prayers and on Al-Jumu'ah and he never stopped distributing the Fatāwa of Pemanent Committee for Fatwa and Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm related to this issue. This is a summary of the Shaykh's views that were the reason for his arrest:

- Objecting to the aid sought from the foreign (kāfir) forces.
- Denouncing the legitimacy of the Saudi state, and this is the most important.
- Objecting to the Military Salute.

## **His Arrest:**

Shaykh Walīd directly and seriously criticized the Saudi State during a full gathering at a time that no one even dared to speak about those matters. So four students of knowledge condemned him and left the gathering angry, directly heading to ibn ‘Uthaymīn where they informed him on what happened during that gathering. So Shaykh ibn ‘Uthaymīn called Shaykh Ahmad As-Sinānī [Shaykh Walīd’s brother], asking them both to come and meet him, because ibn ‘Uthaymīn had an old relationship with both of them.

So Shaykh Ahmad and Shaykh Walīd traveled to ‘Anayzah, and there was a debate and discussion between Shaykh Walīd and ibn ‘Uthaymīn. So Shaykh Walīd again told his convictions providing the proof he used to deliver in these occasions along with the sayings of the scholars. Shaykh Walīd said that ibn Uthaymīn approved most of what he said and remained silent at the end, mentioning that he feared Fitnah. After that he said: “O my son, I fear for you.” Or something similar. It appeared that the debate spread like wildfire among the people and students of knowledge, and it became the talk of the gatherings and a month later Shaykh Walīd was arrested.

## **His situation in prison and the things he had to undergo:**

He was arrested approximately around Jumāda Al-Awal in 1415 AH, while he was sitting in the Masjid after Salāt Al-Maghreb waiting for the ‘Ishāa prayers. The intelligence agents came to him and asked him to come with them to the Riyādh governance, which he did. They talked with him and informed him that they will search his house which he absolutely refused because it’s an act of disrespect towards the sanctity of Muslim homes. But they insisted on searching his house anyway.

Prison for most people at that time was intimidating and it had a horrifying reputation. Because of that, people would only criticize the State while whispering. The people who were detained were terrorized and intimidated into their downfall. During the Shaykh's first night in prison, a guard was amused to find the Shaykh sleeping so soundly and said to him: "What a careless head you have there."

Shaykh Walīd was prohibited from meeting people for years, after that they allowed him to have short meetings with famous scholars shortly before they were released.

Shaykh Walīd met one of the scholars from The Hay'at Kibār Al-'Ulamāa (Council of Senior Scholars) in the prison and he debated with him. Shaykh Walīd: "I debated him until he was quiet and I saw sweat coming out of his forehead.

Thereafter they led the Shaykh to the Supreme Court in Riyādh, where he met one of the judges who asked him to write down the points concerning the Saudi State in a speech and promised him to deliver it. The judge demanded that he would never speak about these evils after this speech he had to write, and they made it a condition for his release. The Shaykh refused it saying: "What about the people who are misguided by the Media?! I can't stay quiet and conceal this while they are being oppressed!"

In 1423 AH they informed the Shaykh that he couldn't get visitation and phone calls from his family for an indefinite period of time. This turned out to be seven years. During those seven years, his family didn't hear a thing from him and neither did he hear from them. Except for the news about the death of his father and the imprisonment of his sons, he was allowed to have two exceptional visits.



During those seven and lean years he was deprived of anything; visits, calls, books, sunbathing, and they took away his radio that Salmān Al-'Owdah gave him before he was released. He said: "I knew nothing of the outside world during those seven years." If it wasn't for the steadfastness Allāh bestowed upon him, this would have been enough to break him.

Soon after this a fire erupted in the prison causing the prison management to gather the prisoners in a single place, where the Shaykh told the story of his imprisonment.

### **The stances of the Shaykh during his imprisonment are many:**

The prosecutor demanded the death-penalty for the Shaykh, and the death threats kept on coming endlessly. The Shaykh always replied that he won't turn back even if a sword was placed on his neck. Some prison officials told Shaykh Walīd's family that some prominent scholars demanded the execution of Shaykh Walīd. The answer of the family was: "It would be a great honor for us."

Shaykh Walīd didn't demand or ask for anything in a way that could provoke the prison guard, to the point that he prohibited him from sunbathing and food that suited his needs in the hope that he submits and begs him for it. But far of a dream that was. This is a glimpse of the 'Izzah of Shaykh Walīd, he never asked them for anything, be it food, drinks, or visits. If they gave it to him he made use of it, if not he remained silent. And this enraged them.

As for the trial of Shaykh Walīd; a Committee was made out of three judges and a secret trial was held, without the knowledge of his family or his lawyer. He was sentenced to prison for the period of 15 years. He will complete 26 years in solitary confinement this year [i.e., 2021 / 1443 AH].

## **The suffering of the Shaykh's children and relatives:**

Some of the Shaykh's relatives wrote a speech demanding his release but they were called in by the Minister of Interior Affairs who took a covenant from them to not demand this again.

In 1424 AH two children of the Shaykh, Subay' [17] and Zāmil [14] were arrested, the latter spent 3 months in jail while the first spent 2.5 years in prison without any form of trial. And before they released Subay' they arrested Ibrāhīm and Zāmil again, and the house of the Shaykh remained empty of any man for three months. After that Zāmil was released followed by Subay'.

Two years later Subay' was arrested a second time, while Zāmil underwent his third arrest. The house yet again remained empty of men for nine months. During these months the family suffered endlessly. Subay' was released 9 months later and Zāmil was transferred to the rest house 4 years after, and he still hasn't got a charge [accusation] against him.

In 1424 AH they arrested the son of his brother Usāmah, and in 1430 AH they arrested another son of his brother 'Umar. And two months later his brother; Shaykh Ahmad As-Sinānī was arrested and a day later his nephew Sālih and a year later his other nephew 'Abd Ar-Rahmān.

And of course during all those arrests the family had to go through, their houses were raided for inspection as they claimed, and during every raid they would raise their weapons in the face of the children and women. Especially the arrest of Ibrāhīm and Zāmil because there were tanks roaming the streets and masked men mounting the neighbour rooftops. The mother of Shaykh Walīd fell on top of her bed trying to be patient and to remember Allāh, while masked men were pointing their rifles and weapons to her head.

The names mentioned above are merely the names of the Sinānī family. Not to mention the husbands of the daughters of the Shaykh and the uncles of the children. It's also good to mention that Shaykh Walīd is the one child of his mother, after the death of his sole sister, who was a caller to Islam; Umm Anass, whom he held close to his heart to the point where he wrote in his will that he is to be buried next to her, due to the love he has for her, may Allāh have mercy on her.

### **The secret behind Shaykh Walīd As-Sinānī's firmness:**

The secret behind Shaykh Walīd As-Sinānī's firmness lies in his extreme delight of being close to his Lord, his Zuhd [asceticism] in Dunyah, and his yearning to meet Allāh. The Shaykh says: "Every time I leave my cell, I yearn to it more and more, and I don't care as long as I die on the Path of Allāh."

He also said: "Every time the heart clings to Allāh and holds Him in high esteem by remembrance, the world returns small in the owner's eyes, like a plane, whenever it ascends in the sky, the houses and land become smaller in the eyes of the passengers."

And Shaykh Sulaymān bin Nāsir Al-'Alwān said about him: "Walid is our Imām in Sabr (patience)."

May Allāh hasten the release of the Shaykh, remember him and us in your Du'ā.

